



# EUROBODALLA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Inc.

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## The Pacific Gull (*Larus pacificus*) – Latham 1801

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### *Taxonomy and distribution*

The genus *Larus* includes roughly 31 species of medium to very large white-headed gulls, though the taxonomy of this group is still in a state of flux. The distribution of the genus is largely in the northern hemisphere with only two species common in Australia: the Kelp Gull and the Pacific Gull (*Larus dominicanus* and *L. pacificus* respectively). The Silver Gull (*Chroicocephalus novaehollandiae*) belongs to a genus that encompasses small gulls, the vast majority of which possess dark coloured heads in breeding plumage.

The Pacific Gull is almost exclusively coastal and is largely restricted to the southern coasts of eastern and western Australia. It has two subspecies: *pacificus* on the east coast and *georgii* on the west coast. The two differ mainly in the eye colouration (pale in *pacificus*, black in *georgii*) and beak shape, with *pacificus* generally having the more robust beak. The species is endemic to Australia.

### *Description and behaviour*

The Pacific Gull is the largest gull to be found in Australia, 50-67 cm in length with a 131-169 cm wingspan (compared to the 54-65 cm length and 128-142 cm wingspan of the Kelp Gull). Juveniles differ markedly in plumage from adult birds, being largely dark brown. It takes four to five years for individuals to fully moult into adult plumage. The adult is a handsome bird, having jet black wings with narrow white trailing edges, a pure white head, neck and underparts, a black tail band and an impressive triangular beak, two thirds rich yellow, prominently tipped bright red.

The massive beak is the largest of any gull species anywhere in the world and is the easiest way to distinguish Pacific Gulls from Kelp Gulls. In addition, juvenile Kelp Gulls are paler than Pacific Gulls, especially on the head, and possess dark-centred, cream-notched

tertials, unlike the largely dark ones of Pacific Gulls. Adult Kelp Gulls possess 'mirrors', strings of pale spots on the primaries, which Pacific Gulls lack. The Pacific Gull has a tail band, which the Kelp Gull lacks. Juvenile Pacific Gulls can be confused with Brown Skuas (*Stercorarius antarcticus*) but Pacific Gulls lack the white wing crescents of the Skua and their flight is lazy compared to that of the Skua.



Pacific Gull adult

Photo: D Bertzeletos

For gulls, Pacific Gulls are generally quiet, though they possess the usual gull repertoire of brays, barks and laughs, uttered in a low tone suitable to their size. In flight their wing beats are slow, deep and powerful and they utilise thermals and strong winds to circle over beaches and harbours in search of prey.



Juvenile Pacific Gull Photo: D Bertzeletos

### *Diet and breeding*

Pacific Gulls are not social creatures; they are generally encountered in pairs or small groups and only occasionally form flocks of hundreds at rubbish tips. The species has not benefited to the extent that other gull species have from human waste. Like nearly all gulls, Pacific Gulls are opportunistic feeders and will eat almost anything organic. Their large beaks allow them to break open and eat shellfish and crabs which they often carry high in the sky before dropping on a hard surface to crack the shell.

They prefer to nest singly or in small colonies on offshore islands. The breeding season commences in October, when both sexes build the shallow cup of grass and gravel where the female lays and incubates 2-3 mottled eggs. It takes just over a month for the chicks to fledge and both parents assist in the rearing.

### *Conservation and status in the Eurobodalla*

The invasion of southern Australia by the Kelp Gull in the 1940s is believed to have caused populations of Pacific Gulls to decline. However, the species is still numerous enough to be considered of least concern by the IUCN. In the Eurobodalla the species is rare but is recorded most years as a non-breeding visitor, with most records being of young birds in the winter

months. The species breeds south of the Eurobodalla. It used to be a numerous breeder around Wollongong though breeding there has largely ceased due to changes in industrial food waste management. Dimitris Bertzeletos

### **What's coming up....**

**Sunday October 28, 9am: Comerang.** Meet opposite the Bodalla Police Station, Princes Highway. Julie and Peter Collett will lead a walk on their farm next to the Tuross River. Rufous Songlark, Stubble Quail, White-winged Triller, Whistling Kite, Brown Falcon, various duck species.

**Saturday November 10, 2pm: Coila Creek Road.** Meet at the corner of the Princes Highway and Coila Creek Road, just south of the Coila Creek service station. The walk is along the road, with farmland and patches of bush. White-throated Gerygone, Scarlet and Brown-headed Honeyeaters, Jacky Winter, Rufous Songlark, Musk Lorikeet.

**Sunday November 25, 9am: Waders Field trip.** Please check the Field Meetings page of the website for the venue, or contact Julie Morgan, Lyn Burden or Mandy Anderson (contact details on the last page of the newsletter) after November 22. The venue for this walk depends on wader activity, weather and water levels in the estuaries. If conditions are not favourable, an alternative walk will be proposed.

### **Out of shire trip: Mallacoota, 5th-10th November 2018**

#### **Please note the change to the dates for this trip**

Notify Lyn ([lynburden60@gmail.com](mailto:lynburden60@gmail.com)) if you plan on attending. We plan on visiting most of the reliable sites in the area. For example, on Wednesday we will be out on the water visiting the Genoa River and the Top and Bottom Lakes, and on Thursday we will be searching for the Beautiful Firetail and visiting Gipsy Point. If you are interested to see the itinerary, contact Lyn for a copy.

## Field meeting program for 2019

The committee will be meeting in mid November to plan the program of field meetings for 2019. We welcome suggestions for places to visit. Please let me or another member of the committee know if there are any walks you'd like to see included or if there is a location within the Eurobodalla you'd like to visit. Contact details of the committee are on the last page of the newsletter. Julie Morgan.

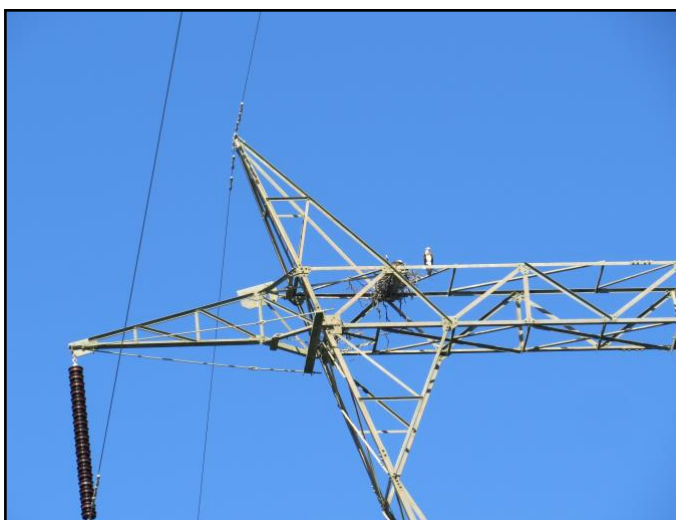
### A warm welcome to new members....

David Gorzalka, Surf Beach  
Annie Hallett, South Durras  
Elizabeth Mackinlay, Malua Bay

### Eastern Osprey breeding activity in the Eurobodalla

We have two pairs of Eastern Osprey attempting to breed in the Eurobodalla this winter.

The pair that successfully nested on Budd Island at Batemans Bay in 2017 started refurbishing their nest in May. Three ospreys were present and we assumed that the third bird was last year's young. On July 17, gale-force winds broke the dead tree that housed the nest, which crashed to the ground. One of the Clyde River oyster farmers, Steve, took ENHS members, Nicola and Grahame, over to Budd Island to see the remains of the nest. There were no signs of any chicks or eggs. On July 22, the three birds were nest-building again, this time on an electricity pylon on the southern shore of the Clyde River.



Eastern Osprey nest Batemans Bay

Photo: Nicola Clarke

Members continue to see three birds at this nest site. It is common for raptors to see off young from previous years before nesting. While we cannot be certain that the third bird is the young from 2017, it is likely, given the low incidence of Eastern Osprey in our area. According to the Handbook of Australian, New Zealand and Antarctic Birds (HANZAB), when ospreys are nesting, pairs are common but family groups are rare. HANZAB also reports an instance of three birds where the third bird was seen carrying a stick and another instance where a third bird brought a stick to the nest of another pair. There is still much to learn about the nesting behaviour of these birds.



Eastern Osprey at Moruya Heads Photo: Geoff McVeigh

The second pair of Eastern Osprey breeding in the Eurobodalla is at Moruya Heads. There have been reports of a male and female at Moruya Heads over the past year or so. On July 2, a pair was observed on top of a telecommunications tower, seeing off a pair of Australian Raven. Later that day, one osprey was observed on the tower, feeding on a fish. The birds began nest building on July 4 and were seen at the nest each day throughout July.

Both pairs of osprey are using artificial structures and this has necessitated ENHS liaising with NPWS and the relevant authorities responsible for the structures. So far, the authorities have been very cooperative. We will watch with interest to see if these nesting attempts are successful. Julie Morgan

## Buff-banded Rails: Comings and Goings

Janet and John Houghton's house is on a steep south-facing block in Tuross Head. When they bought it as a holiday home in 1992, the back garden was mostly lawn. But since they retired and moved in permanently they have transformed it into the 'little bit of bush' that Janet wanted, a flourishing native garden with dense cover, containing several bird baths and a bird table. At the top of the garden is a small chook pen. The gardens on either side and behind are more open, with large lawns. Across the road in front of the house is a small area of bush with patches of thick undergrowth beneath bangalay, pittosporum, acacia and casuarina. Beyond is Lavender Bay.

Janet has been keeping bird records for over 40 years. She began her Tuross Head records in 1992 and continued until early 2018. A main feature of the Tuross log for the past five years has been the regular appearance of Buff-Banded Rail. These handsome, ground-dwelling birds are usually secretive, and sightings are often fleeting, so the records raise almost as many questions as they answer. Here are a few highlights.

On 19<sup>th</sup> Feb 2013, the Houghtons saw an adult Buff-banded Rail in their garden for the first time. Around then, another Tuross resident began seeing the same species in his garden. For several months, Janet and John had frequent but brief sightings of one adult bird, either in the garden or crossing the road between the front garden and Lavender Bay. He or she was often seen near the chook pen or under the bird table, feeding on seed that had been scattered by Crimson Rosella and White-headed Pigeon.

On 17<sup>th</sup> September 2013, two adult birds were seen together. From November onwards, one or two adult birds were seen daily in the garden or nearby. The first evidence of breeding was on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2013, when an adult appeared with two small black chicks. By 9<sup>th</sup> December, there was only one chick, and 12 days later Janet recorded having seen an adult bird on its own. Then on 27<sup>th</sup> December a brown juvenile, still small enough to squeeze through the wire, was seen inside the chook pen. On 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2014, two adults and three black chicks crossed the road from Lavender Bay to the front garden; Janet wrote that they stopped the traffic. For almost three weeks, two adults and one or two chicks were seen, until Grey



"Buffy"

Photo: Julie Collett

Butcherbirds visited the garden. Then Janet found a scattering of small black feathers and saw no more chicks. But a juvenile continued to visit the chook pen regularly until mid-February, when it was too big to get in.

From March onwards and throughout the winter of 2014, Janet regularly saw one or two adult birds. It was not until August that she realised the calls she had been hearing regularly for some time belonged to the Buff-banded Rail: a single piping note, repeated frequently and another call 'rather like a donkey'. The next sign of breeding was on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2014, when two black chicks appeared alone on next door's lawn. These two were never seen again.

On 10<sup>th</sup> December 2014, Janet recorded a strange sighting: an adult pushing a single egg across a neighbour's lawn. By early 2015, it seemed that there were two or more pairs of breeding birds in the neighbourhood. Views of an adult with three chicks were followed two days later by sightings of two adults with a juvenile, and later the same day two or possibly three chicks on their own. On 19<sup>th</sup> January, Janet recorded Buff-banded Rails 'all over the garden', with two to four adults and three or four chicks. Around 2015, Janet began to refer in her notes to regular visits from 'Buffy'. This rail acquired a name because he or she had become semi-tame and recognisable, coming for seed and following Janet and John around the garden. On 28<sup>th</sup> October 2016 Janet disturbed Buffy sitting on a nest. Buffy and partner took it in turns to sit, sometimes leaving the nest briefly unattended. On 30<sup>th</sup> October Janet saw that the round nest was lined with dry leaves and contained eight fawn eggs with bright red spots. On 4<sup>th</sup> November, John saw chicks at the nest. The next day six chicks were in the garden with the adults and two dead chicks were in the nest. The largest number of live chicks was recorded at Christmastime 2017, when two adults with eight chicks were seen on a nearby grassy footpath. It seems that the survival rate is low. The Houghtons have witnessed only one predation, a chick being taken by

a Kookaburra. But judging by the feathers found and the dwindling numbers, many do not make it past the ‘tiny ball of black fluff’ stage.

Since Janet and I began preparing this article, there have been further developments. In February 2018, several Buff-banded Rail were visiting the garden regularly. The visits stopped in early March and had not resumed when we wrote this in late June. Then, in September, Buffy returned. Gillian Macnamara

## Wallaby Days, Part Two

*This is the second part of an article which began in the Summer edition of the newsletter. The introduction is repeated in the first 2 paragraphs for context. For the rest of Part One see the Summer 2018 edition of the ENHS Newsletter which is available on the Newsletter page of our website, [enhs.org.au](http://enhs.org.au)*

We live on 20 hectares of bush and, as would be familiar to those members who live in the bush, we are regularly visited by Eastern Grey Kangaroos and Swamp Wallabies. Red-necked Wallabies are also on our property, but we don't see them as often as the other two.

For at least three years now, we have been visited daily by a growing group of Swamp Wallabies, all individually recognisable by their ears, face or eye shape, or fur colour. They come because they like the bird seed that we put out each day. We have come to know each individual very well, and they have become very tame. There is very little in the literature about the behaviour of these animals, probably because it would be difficult to study them, especially their interactions as, apart from the females and their young, they appear to be solitary. Our situation is an artificial one, as it brings individuals (up to five at a time) into close contact. Nevertheless, over the years we have learned much about the ‘pseudo-natural’ history of these animals that we thought would be of interest to ENHS members.

### The big news is that Junior has a joey!

1. Regurgitation. This behaviour is documented in the literature. Fats, Mrs and Junior regularly undergo violent movements of the upper body and arms, resulting in the regurgitation of partially digested plant material. Usually this material only comes as far as the mouth and is chewed and swallowed. Sometimes, if there is a lot, it is vomited onto the ground and eaten from there. This is a form of rumination, without the rumen; unlike cows, for instance, wallabies do not have a rumen. The rumen enables the animal to get a second go at material that is hard to digest.

2. When the various individuals interact, they usually stretch out towards one another, and their heads and ears start quivering. This happens between any combination of the animals in the group. We cannot find this behaviour in the literature. We think it might be some sort of visual signal, but more likely is a way of moving air rapidly through the nose to enhance olfactory acuity in this delicate situation. Wallabies that are close to each other do not always interact this way, and will feed together and completely ignore each other. But usually individuals maintain at least a 2m distance from one another. If this distance is breached, one wallaby will move, or there will be the quiver interaction, and then one wallaby will move.



Junior in the bird bath on a hot day

Photo: M&S Guppy

Physical interaction occurs mainly between Mrs and her joeys, when she reaches the stage when she will no longer tolerate them being near her. She will rear up with the front legs held out wide from the body and jump at the other animal. When she does this she utters a low pitched grunt. We have also seen this same interaction between Fats and the joeys, and between Mrs and Albertine. On some occasions, when the joeys are feeding closer and closer to Fats, he only has to turn his head slightly for the joey to move away.

3. These wallabies, despite being able to run through thick bush at high speeds, do not seem to be able to see any sort of food, either on the ground or in the air. If a bit of food is thrown to them, they have no concept of following it in the air; they will keep looking at the thrower while the food arcs in front of their face. They detect it by smell after it has landed on the ground. Often the bit of food can be only 15 cm from their nose and they still don't see it, but locate it by smell. Fats sniffed out the bin in our carport in which we keep the seed. He managed to get the lid off the bin and tip it over. When we bring seed back from town, in a large plastic bag, if we don't immediately put it in the bin, Fats will find it by smell, and tear a hole in the bag to get at the seed. The wallabies' sense of smell is extremely good; they can smell bird seed in a dish 2m high. But how they can race through thick bush without banging into things is a bit of a mystery.

4. We feed the various animals and birds (wallabies, magpies, butcher birds, parrots, wrens, finches, blue-tongue lizard) four different things: bird seed, a bread/meat mix (bread sprayed with oil and mixed with a honeyeater powder mix, and bits of meat or bacon), puppy pellets, and fruit and vegetables. The wallabies regularly eat the bird seed, the bread mix (and the meat if it is there), and the puppy food. They like all the brassicas, but are not too keen on lettuce, pumpkin or potato. They like carrots, top and bottom, apple, pear, banana, and the skins of mango, kiwi fruit and papaya. They take a long time to eat very small amounts of food. Anything larger than bird seed or puppy pellets is held in the hands and eaten. This sort of communal eating, and thus competition, would not occur in the wild, so they have learned to pick up a piece of food in their mouth (never in the hands) and hop away to eat it in private. It took about a year for them to learn to do this. Mother and a pouched joey will eat the same piece of food from opposite ends, and a young joey out of the pouch will take food from its mother's mouth, with impunity.

We don't have any sort of reliable impression as to when the joeys started eating solid food. They certainly suckled when they were also eating solid food, and it may be that they do not eat solid food while they are still returning to the pouch. But we don't have any useful time frames for any of these occurrences. Sarah and Michael Guppy

### Wispy White Beards, But Only On The Girls

The genus *Clematis* is a member of the Ranunculaceae family. There are approximately 300 species worldwide, found mostly in temperate zones. There are 6 species native to Australia, growing in all states; 2 species occur naturally in the Eurobodalla region. The name comes from the Greek *klema* meaning a vine branch.

Clematis are climbing plants with woody stems. They attach themselves by twisting their long petioles (leaf stalks) or stems around nearby shrubs and trees. Juvenile leaves consist of a single dark green leaflet with pale markings around the veins. Adult leaves are opposite and compound, usually with 3 leaflets. These vines are conspicuous in forests and woodlands during and after flowering. Masses of white flowers are produced in late winter, spring and summer. Flowers have 4 star-like sepals and no petals. Male and female flowers are usually found on different plants. Female flowers develop into even more conspicuous fruit with long, silky appendages up to 6cm long. These form from the styles of the female flowers which remain attached to each seed. This gives the effect of a wispy, light beard and assists with seed dispersal.



*Clematis aristata*

Photo courtesy of ERBG

Clematis are suitable for most gardens. They generally do not damage the plants they climb on and can also be grown as ground covers if there is nothing to climb over. Both flowers and fruit are decorative and very dense growth provides safe nesting sites for small birds. They also attract butterflies as the leaves are suitable for the larvae and the flowers provide nectar for the adults.

Aboriginal people and early settlers used the leaves as a cure for headaches. Crushing the leaves and warming them in the hands releases a vapour which is then inhaled. However, apparently this treatment was worse than

the headache, as in this quote from herbalist Cheryll Williams “The uncomfortable sensation of breathing in the ammonia-like fumes has been described as “the head ‘exploding’, the eyes ‘watering’ and intense irritation of the nasal passages – such that the initial headache was quickly forgotten.” It is also more or less effective depending on the environmental conditions. Handling the leaves may irritate sensitive skin. Another use of the leaves was as a poultice to treat aching joints.

The two local native species are *Clematis aristata* and *Clematis glycinoides*. *Clematis aristata* is commonly known as Old Man’s Beard or Traveller’s Joy. It is a widespread and variable species found in Qld, NSW, Vic, Tas, and WA, mostly on the coast and nearby ranges, in dry scrub to wet sclerophyll forest. Plants can climb up to 6m. Leaves are usually trifoliate, shiny dark green with 3 parallel veins and toothed margins. They vary from 2 to 10cm long and 1 to 4.5cm wide. Seedlings are purplish with conspicuous silver venation. Flowers are white to cream, on long slender stalks, developing in the leaf axils of upper leaves. They are generally between 3 and 6cm across; those growing in moist gullies may be up to 8cm. The tip of the anther has a pointed appendage which is as long as, or longer than, the anther. The species name is from the Greek *arista* meaning awned. The fruit is a globular head of achenes (dry, single seeded fruits) which persist for months on the female plants. The styles remain attached to the seeds, forming fine, hairy tails. The flowering period is usually from September to December. This species is widely cultivated in Eastern Australia. It will grow in a wide variety of soil types, in sun or shade and dry to moist conditions.

*Clematis glycinoides* is commonly known as Forest Clematis, Headache Vine and also Old Man’s Beard. It is also a variable species and grows in rainforest, sheltered gullies, woodlands and heath on the coast and tablelands of Qld, NSW and Vic. Leaves are variable in size, shape and colour and also trifoliate. They are between 1.5 and 12cm long and 1 to 8cm wide, with prominent veins. The margins are usually smooth, or may have a single tooth near the base. This is the derivation of the species name (like a glycine) and an easy way to distinguish between the 2 species. They climb up to 2.5m. Flowers are also variable in size and colour. They are similar to *C.aristata* except they are generally smaller (3 to 4cm across) and the anthers have a short, blunt appendage. Flowering time is between August and November. The fruits are similar to *C.aristata*. This species is not as widely cultivated. It is less adaptable, as it requires cool, moist, shady conditions and may be frost sensitive. Fran Anderson



Clematis glycinoides

Photo courtesy of ERBG

### Cullendulla Creek Field Meeting, August 2018

There are certain locations that are included in our field meeting program every few years in the hope that we see a particular species of bird; at Cullendulla Creek, it’s the Southern Emu-wren. This species is only reported from a handful of locations in the Eurobodalla and if you’re lucky, a number of birds can be seen in the low vegetation behind the beach at Cullendulla. The Southern Emu-wren at this location move between the taller trees and drop down to hide in the bracken. The best way to see these birds is to watch for movement just above the bracken. Conditions on the day weren’t great as it was very windy and there was a lot of movement. We heard a call but although we watched carefully, we didn’t see any birds ... they were keeping out of sight.

Despite the windy conditions, we were rewarded with great views of other species that we weren’t particularly expecting to see. A male Scarlet Robin posed for views and photos and at least four Varied Sittella flew into a nearby tree and fed along a dead branch. Then, as we walked back along the boardwalk, we saw an Eastern Barn Owl that was roosting quite low in the mangroves. We all had great views of this magnificent bird and there was some debate about which of



Eastern Barn Owl Photo: Roman Soroka

the Tyto owls it was - Masked or Barn. While it looked big, we had to allow for the viewing circumstances... it was so close and at eye level! Photos and later consultation confirmed it was an adult female Eastern Barn Owl.

ENHS members and local residents, Kevin and Megan, pointed out the masses of flowering orchids on the casuarinas. These orchids are known as Rat's Tail Orchid or Pencil Orchid (*Dendrobium teretifolium*) and they grow almost exclusively on Swamp She-oak (*Casuarina glauca*). In the Eurobodalla, they commonly flower in August/September. As we walked back along the beach, an unusual marine creature attracted much interest. It was later identified as a Sea Hare, so called because the tentacles were thought to resemble the ears of a hare. Sea Hares live on intertidal rocky shores and in seagrass and emit a purple dye when threatened. Julie Morgan

### Field trip to Reedy Creek Road, west of Bodalla

Julie and Peter Collett led the walk to Reedy Creek Road in late August on a fine but cold day. The forecast had been for rain but luckily that didn't eventuate. In preparation for the field meeting, Julie and Peter had driven out to Reedy Creek Road earlier in the week and found some interesting birds along the Eurobodalla Road. They suggested we stop at a couple of swamps on the way.

Our first stop was a swamp at Cheese Factory Bridge which had some water and muddy areas exposed around the margin. A Yellow-billed Spoonbill was wading in the water while 3 Royal Spoonbill rested on the bank, with their bills tucked away. Pacific Black Duck, Australian Wood Duck and Grey Teal fed and, while we were trying to identify the species of grebe that swam among them, a wader flew out of the reeds. It was so fast that no one got a great look at the bird but by putting together the features we each saw, we concluded that it was a Latham's Snipe. This species has been observed at this location in previous years and, in December 2012, there was also an Australian Painted Snipe.

The second stop was at Taylor's. This swamp provided great habitat for over 30 Eurasian Coot and many species of duck, the most interesting of which were 7 Hardhead. A Great Egret was having quite a struggle eating a small eel or snake. There was also a Black-fronted Dotterel feeding on the muddy edge of the dam. In recent months, a Great Crested Grebe had been seen on the water but it was not there on the day of the field trip.

On to Reedy Creek Road, where we were greeted by a Superb Lyrebird in full voice, mimicking Eastern Whipbird, Pied Currawong and Grey Butcherbird as well as doing its own "pellick" call. Flowering mistletoe

attracted a number of honeyeater species: Yellow-faced, White-eared, Lewin's, White-cheeked, New Holland and White-naped. There was a big migration of Red Wattlebird during the walk. High up in the air, a Little Eagle circled the area. On the way back to the car, we saw the first butterfly of the season, a female Bright Copper. According to the field guide, this species prefers a slope above a creek, near its larval food plant, Bursaria. Reedy Creek Road could not have fitted the habitat description more closely. Our thanks to Julie and Peter for leading a most enjoyable field meeting. Julie Morgan



Bright Copper butterfly

Photo: Paul Gatenby



*ENHS members have many stories to tell about their observations of nature. 'My Patch' is a forum where these stories can be shared with others and will be published both in the newsletter and on the website. Photos are welcome. Please send your contributions to [mypatch@enhs.org.au](mailto:mypatch@enhs.org.au)*

*Logo design by Trevor King*



## Tortoise Beetles

Last summer I was excited to find my first Tortoise beetle at home at Comerang, having only seen them in photographs and been quite fascinated with their appearance. It was tiny, about 1cm round and yes, tortoise-shell shaped. At a distance, it looked like a discoloured mark on a leaf. This species was *Cassida compuncta* and was coloured green, cream and reddish brown. It was feeding on a leaf of the weed Mile a Minute (*Ipomoea cairica*) and was later seen on a Lomandra. Tortoise Beetles are a type of leaf beetle, family Chrysomelidae. The edge of the body can be flattened so it is pressed down firmly against a leaf when the beetle is being threatened. Julie Collett



Tortoise Beetle

Photo: J Collett

## Highlights from ENHS records - Winter 2018

Avian species	Number	Place	Observer	Comments
Emu	3	T'bella	MA	
Stubble Quail	Up to 10	Com	JC	
Brown Quail	3 to 6	Com	JC	
Freckled Duck	3 to 20	Com	JC	June/July
Pink-eared Duck	2 to 11	Com	JC	In June
Australian Shoveler	41, 9, 5	Com/TN/MYA	JC/NC	
Hardhead	32, 7, 5	Com/MO/ Eurobodalla Rd	JC/NM/FM	
Hoary-headed Grebe	At least 60	Brou L	NC	In August
Great Crested Grebe	1	Eurobodalla Rd	V Brown/JC/ NC/SB	An immature bird in June/July
Brown Cuckoo-Dove	Up to 30	MKS	SMG	
Bar-shouldered Dove	1, call	Surfside/BP	R Soroka/ FM	
Topknot Pigeon	17	Bimbimbee	DB	June
Wandering Albatross	1	MHS	DB/NC/JM	
Black-browed Albatross	Up to 30	MHS	DB/NC/JM	
Shy Albatross	Up to 30	MHS	DB/NC/JM	
Yellow-nosed Albatross	1	Wasp Hd/MHS	FM/DB	
Buller's Albatross	1	BP	DB/JM	
Giant Petrel sp	1-2	MHS	DB/NC/JM	Immatures in June and August
Fairy Prion	40, 20	MHS/BP	JM/NC	Hundreds off MHS and Wasp Head not identified to species.
Fluttering Shearwater	2000, 50	MHS/BP	DB/NC/JM	
Hutton's Shearwater	1	MHS	DB	
Little Penguin	6, 2	MHS	DB/JM	
Australasian Gannet	40, 20	MO/MHS	NM/JM	
Australasian Darter	1	Sth DS/MHS/ Com	JCof/JM/JC	
Intermediate Egret	2, 1	MYA/MB	JM/MA	
Cattle Egret	20	MYA/Com	JM/JC	
Eastern Reef Egret	3, 1	MB/BP/MHS/ MO	MA/DB/JM/ NC/NM	
Royal Spoonbill	15, 10, 8	MHS/MB/ ERBG	PHH/MA/ M Burk	
Yellow-billed Spoonbill	2, 1	Com/MYA Eurobodalla Rd	JC/JM/FM	June and August
Eastern Osprey	3, 2	BB/MHS	R Soroka/ NC/JM	Nest building at both locations
Square-tailed Kite	2, 1	BB/MHS/MYA/ MO/MB	DB/JM/JC/ NM/MA	June record at MB, all others in August

Brown Goshawk	1	Com/MB	JC/MA	
Collared Sparrowhawk	1	PS	JM	
Grey Goshawk	1	Cullendulla Ck/ MO/ Reedy Ck	FM/NM	
Swamp Harrier	1	PS/MB	JM/MA	
Little Eagle	1	Reedy Ck Rd	FM	
Peregrine Falcon	1	BP/MO/Com/ Reedy Ck Rd	FM/NM/JC	
Buff-banded Rail	1	BBWG/TS/Com	DB/GM/JC	
Spotless Crake	2	BBWG	DB	
Aust Pied Oystercatcher	6, 5	WL/Broulee	FM/GLM	
Black-winged Stilt	1 or 2	Com/ T'bella/ WL	JC/JM/FM	
Red-capped Plover	25, 12	WL/MHS	FM/JM	
Double-banded Plover	4, 2	MHS/Sth DS/ Brou L/WL/BI	JM/JCof/NC/ FM/MA	Colouring up in August
Black-fronted Dotterel	1 or 2	Com/Eurobodalla Rd/WL	JC/FM	
Hooded Plover	1 or 2	Bingie Bch/MO/ MB	AM/NM/MA	New location for species at Bingie Bch; not seen at MO for 20 years
Latham's Snipe	1	Eurobodalla Rd	FM	Cheese Factory Bridge
Bar-tailed Godwit	3	NA	DO	
Whimbrel	1	WL	FM	In July
Eastern Curlew	1	MHS	DB/NC	In August
Grey-tailed Tattler	1	CO	V Brown/NC	Overwintering
Red-necked Stint	1	Brou L	NC	August
Brown Skua	Up to 4	MHS	DB/NC/JM	June and August
Caspian Tern	30	WL	FM	
White-fronted Tern	15, 10, 1	BP/MHS/Wasp Head	DB/JM/FM	
Pacific Gull	1	MHS	DB/NC/JM	Juvenile in June and August
Glossy Black Cockatoo	3, 2, 1	PS/MKS/ Bimbimbee	JM/SMG/DB	Fewer records and smaller numbers than usual
Gang-Gang Cockatoo	10, 3, 2	Cool/Sth DS/ MKS	DO/JCof/ SMG	
Scaly-breasted Lorikeet	4, 1	MYA/ Bimbimbee	JM/DB	
Musk Lorikeet	50	Cullendulla Ck	FM	
Little Lorikeet	20	Murramarang NP	DSD/JM	
Swift Parrot	8, 4, 2	Murramarang NP/Sth DS	DSD/JM/ JCof/FM	
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	1	SthDS/Malua Bay/MO/MHN	JCof/MW/N M/V Brown	Fewer records than in recent years
Eastern Barn Owl	1	Com/ Cullendulla Ck	JC/FM	
Azure Kingfisher	1	BBWG/MHN/ Com	DB/MF/JC	
Variegated Fairy-wren	10, 4	PS/MO	JM/NM	
Southern Emu-wren	5, 4, call	Broulee/ Bimbimbee/ Cullendulla Ck	GLM/DB/ FM	New location for the species in Bimbimbee.
Striated Pardalote	1 or 2	PS/MO/Com	JM/NM/JC	In July/August
White-eared Honeyeater	5, 4, 3	Bimbimbee/PS/ MO	DB/JM/NM	
Yellow-tufted HE	1	WL	FM	
Fuscous Honeyeater	20, 2	Murramarang NP/ PS	DSD/JM	
Scarlet Honeyeater	1	PS/MO	JM/NM	First return August 20 at MO

White-cheeked Honeyeater	4, 2	CO/Broulee/ Reedy Ck Rd	FM/GLM	
White-naped Honeyeater	20	Murramarang NP/ Reedy Ck	DSD/JM/FM	
Noisy Friarbird	1	Com	JC	First return August 18
Spotted Quail-thrush	2, 1	Belowra Rd/ Bodalla SF	JC/DSD/JM	
Varied Sittella	15, 6, 4	Sth DS	JCof	
White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike	2, 1	Murramarang NP/PS	DSD/JM	
Crested Shrike-tit	4, 2	MO/Sth DS	NM/FM	
Australasian Figbird	5	MYA	JM	
Grey Currawong	Up to 6, 1	Belowra/Cool	JC/DO	
Little Raven	More than 200, 4	Com/MB	JC/MA	
Restless Flycatcher	1 or 2	Com/Eurobodalla Rd/Belowra	JC/FM	
Scarlet Robin	3, 2, 1	Belowra/PS/ Cullendulla Ck/ Cool	JC/JM/FM/ DO	
Rose Robin	1 or 2	MHS/MB/Com/ Surfside/Reedy Ck Rd	JM/MA/JC/R Soroka/FM	
Golden-headed Cisticola	3 to 6	Com	JC	
Rufous Songlark	1	Belowra	JC	On August 31
Tree Martin	20, 10	Com/Belowra/ MYA/Reedy Ck	JC/JM/FM	Fewer at 4 other locations. More reports this winter.
Bassian Thrush	2, 1	Malua Bay/ WL/Sth DS	MW/FM/ JCof	
Common Blackbird	1	Malua Bay/Com /MB/WL	MW/JC/MA/ FM	More reports this winter
Mistletoebird	2, 1	PS/CO/Reedy Ck Rd	JM/FM	
Diamond Firetail	6	Belowra	JC	In July
Australian Pipit	8, 4, 1	Com/Belowra/ Bingie Bch	JC/NC	

Non-avian species	Number	Place	Observer	Comments
Short-beaked Echidna	1	PS/Sth DS	JM/JCof	
Spotted-tailed Quoll	Signs	PS	JM	
Common Wombat	3, 1	Cool/Com/ Belowra	DO/JC	
Yellow-bellied Glider	1 or 2	Mossy Pt	HR	
Sugar Glider	1 or 2 or calls	Mossy Pt/PS/ Com	HR/JM/JC	
Common Brushtail Possum	Up to 7, 2, 1	Com/Lilli Pilli /Mossy Pt/ Cool	JC/IAG/HR/ DO	
Eastern Grey Kangaroo	Up to 79	Cool	DO	
Red-necked Wallaby	10, 3, 1	Belowra/Cool/ Mossy Pt	JC/DO/HR	
Swamp Wallaby	5, 4	PS/Cool	JM/DO	
Grey-headed Flying Fox	1	Mossy Pt	HR	
Microbat sp	1	PS	JM	
Red Fox	1 or 2	Com	JC	
Deer sp.		West Flat	JC	West of Bodalla
Seal sp.	10, 6, 2, 1	MHS/BP/CO/ DS	DB/NC/JM/ FM	

Bottle-nosed Dolphin	Up to 30	MHS	JM	
Southern Right Whale	2	Off Long Bch/ Kianga/TS	NC/T&A Ross/MCraig	Mother and calf seen at a number locations.
Humpback Whale	11, 6, 5	BP/DS/MHS	FM/DB/JM	
Pilot Whale	2	Wasp Head	FM	
Snake-necked Turtle	2	Com	JC	
Dark-flecked Garden Sunskink	1	Mossy Pt	HR	
Eastern Blue-tongue	1	Mossy Pt	HR	
Eastern Small-eyed Snake	1	Coila	NC	Found dead in August
Red-bellied Black Snake				No winter records this year.

<b>Frogs</b> JC/JM/DO/HR	Common Eastern Froglet, Brown Striped Frog, Bibron's Toadlet; tree frogs: Brown, Eastern Sedgefrog, Jervis Bay, Keferstein's, Peron's, Southern Leaf-green, Verreaux's.
<b>Moths</b> JC/JM/MF	Ghost, Plume, Corded Geometrid, Plain Line, Dashed Geometrid, Southern Grey, Twin Emerald, Cream Wave, Subidaria, White-stemmed Gum, Patterned Notodontid (larvae), White Tussock, Variable Halone, Triangle Owlet, Green-blotched, Variable Cutworm, Native Budworm
<b>Butterflies</b> JC/JM/FM	Black Jezebel, Cabbage White, Bright Copper
<b>Beetles</b> JC	Acacia Leaf Beetle. Ladybirds: Striped, Fungus-eating, Striped, White collared, Tortoise-shelled.
<b>Other</b> JC/JM	Common Paper Wasp, White-faced Brown Paper Wasp, Garden Praying Mantid.
<b>Spiders</b> JC/JM	Leaf-curling, Daddy Long Legs, Black House, Huntsman, Jumping, Two-tailed, Mouse.

**RAINFALL (mm).** **June:** 43 at Lilli Pilli, 62 at MKS, 93.5 at Com, 159 at MB, 109.3 at Cool. **July:** 1 at MKS, 8 at Com, 2.5 at MB, 2.5 at Cool. **August:** 10 at Lilli Pilli, 1 at MKS (to 24<sup>th</sup>), 5 at Com, 4.5 at Cool.

### Contributors

MA	M Anderson, MB	SMG	S&M Guppy, MKS	DO	D Ondinea, Cool
DB	D Bertzeletos, Surfside	PHH	P&H Haughton, Lilli Pilli	HR	H Ransom, Mossy Pt
NC	N Clark, Surf Beach	DHK	D&H Kay, Bergalia	MW	M Wilkinson, Malua Bay
JCof	J Coffey, DS	GLM	G&L McVeigh, Broulee	FM	Field Meeting
JC	J&P Collett, Com	GM	G Macnamara, TS		V Brown, ACT
DSD	D Deans, ACT	AM	A Marsh, Bingie		M Burk, DS
MF	M Fyfe, Broulee	NM	N Montgomery, MO		M Craig, TS
IAG	I&A Grant, Lilli Pilli	JM	J Morgan, PS		R Soroka, Surfside
<b>Places</b>					
BB	Batemans Bay	ERBG	Eurobodalla Botanic Gardens	PS	Pedro Swamp
BBWG	Batemans Bay Water Gardens	MKS	Maulbrooks Rd S, MYA	PP	Potato Point
BI	Bermagui	MO	Meringo	SB	Surf Beach
BP	Burrewarra Point	MYA	Moruya	SF	State Forest
Cool	Coolagolite	MH	Moruya Heads, N&S	T`bella	Trunketabella
Com	Comerang	MB	Mystery Bay	TN	Tomakin
CO	Congo	NA	Narooma	TS	Tuross
DS	Durras	NP	National Park	WL	Wallaga Lake

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